

Regional Conservation Planning Data Needs

Philip Bloch

People For Puget Sound

Jeff Ardron

Living Oceans Society

Zach Ferdaña

The Nature Conservancy of Washington

Peter Etnoyer

Abstract

Conservation organizations and resource managers have begun using regional, national, and even international conservation planning as a tool to develop strategic plans for conservation of ecosystems so that resources can be efficiently and effectively protected. This approach is predicated on the idea that sufficient information is available and can be interpreted appropriately to make informed decisions.

However at all scales of analysis various challenges are encountered as we attempt to plan for ecosystem conservation. These challenges include: the lack of data availability to planners; inappropriate or varying data resolutions; questionable data quality and reliability; inadequate or inappropriate data information (metadata); and varying or inadequate data collection or management standards (protocols).

We will examine several regional conservation planning efforts and examine lessons learned regarding the current state of data collection and management. Analysis of existing projects will also examine the reliability of analytical outputs given data uncertainty. In particular, we will examine impacts of incomplete information on the results of conservation planning efforts.